

01291 SALT



LT. GEN.
**DANIEL
GRAHAM**

U.S. ARMY (RET.)

The Carter Administration claims that the Soviets have made significant concessions in SALT. This claim is fraudulent. The much-touted lowering of the Vladivostok totals of nuclear delivery systems for both sides in fact lowers the U.S. total while raising the Soviet total. This is so because the new agreements exclude from the ceilings the Soviet version of a B-1 bomber, the Backfire, but include the aging U.S. B-52 force. Further, the U.S. B-52's when armed with cruise missiles are counted against a proposed MIRV sub-ceiling, while this modern Soviet bomber force of Backfires, however armed, goes scot free.

The Administration claims that a limit of 800 for MIRVed ICBMs removes the Soviet threat to our Minuteman force. Not so, within such a ceiling the Soviets can pose a heavy threat to U.S. land-based systems of from 6,000 to 8,000 warheads (a killing 5 to 8 per Minuteman silo) and have half their ICBM force left over to strike other targets. Assuming that they would adhere to the MIRVed weapons ceiling of 1320 in the Vladivostok agreement, the Soviets quite probably would not have MIRVed more than 800 ICBMs in any case, preferring to MIRV about half of their 950 submarine-launched missiles. Thus, the Soviets concede nothing, and there is absolutely no perceptible gain for the United States in this sub-limit of 800 MIRVed ICBMs on both sides.

The proposed restrictions on cruise missile ranges and launch modes also work heavily to U.S. disadvantage. The range restrictions on ship-borne missiles make it possible for the Soviets to threaten 100 per cent of the population and industry of Western Europe and Japan and 69 per cent of the population and industry of the United States with nuclear-armed cruise missiles not counted in SALT. By comparison, the U.S. would be able similarly to threaten only 15 per cent of Soviet industry and population.

Again, we lose. Finally, the new SALT proposals simply scrap one of the fundamental considerations of all previous U.S. positions — verifiability. If the SALT package now being huckstered is accepted by the U.S., it will have to be accepted essentially on faith. Much of it is simply beyond intelligence capabilities to verify Soviet compliance. The Backfire bomber is to be excluded from the weapons ceilings on the basis of a Soviet promise not to use them for inter-continental missions, that is, against the United States. Determining the validity of any such Soviet declaration of intent regarding these bombers is an impossible task. And it is preposterous to believe the Soviets would feel constrained by such a promise to refrain from using Backfire against the U.S. in war. Verification of the MIRVed or un-MIRVed status of Soviet ICBMs in their underground silos is also a near-impossibility. Insuring Soviet compliance with range limits on cruise missiles is another impossible verification task. There is no way to ascertain by taking a picture that a cruise missile can be used only at a given range. As for limitations on Soviet research and development of new weaponry, no honest intelligence officer would claim to be able to detect, let alone prove, violations.

With all the advantages accruing to the Soviets from the bilateral SALT talks, it is small wonder that the Kremlin, after flatly rejecting early Carter Administration proposals, is now optimistic about SALT. In light of broad U.S. concessions, Gromyko now describes negotiations as "businesslike" and "useful." Not only has the Soviet side been able to get the U.S. negotiators to reaffirm the Vladivostok formulation, but to accept the Soviet interpretation of Vladivostok regarding their new Backfire bomber and our new cruise missile technology.

Previous SALT agreements have cancelled out our best chance to protect our country from nuclear attack, the U.S. ABM (anti-ballistic missile) system. In interim agreements we have granted to the Soviets a 1600 to 1000 advantage in ICBMs, with their systems able to carry more than twice the nuclear payload of ours. We granted the Kremlin 950 submarine launchers on 62 submarines, against our 710 launchers on 44 submarines. These dangerous inequities should be reversed by the new Administration. Instead they are being compounded by new proposals which assist the Soviet Union in its thrust for unchallengeable global military domination.